Futagashira -Chapter 01-
by Natsume Ono

Hatsumimi: Mimi de gozaru. Yoropiku Edo-style de gozaru. m(_ _)m

popxherrypop: You are the Translator de gozaru?

Hatsumimi: Yes, you are my Proofreader de gozaru? Where's my editor de gozaru?

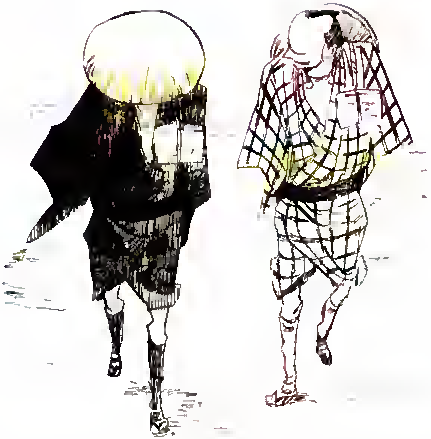
Minelauwa: (meekly raises hand) Over here...

Hatsumimi: (cups hand over ear) Over here...what, de gozaru?

Minelauwa (feeling as if she's been robbed of her soul): Over here...de...gozaru..

Stiletto: Cut that out!

And thus begins these closet Fujoshis' nonsensical journey to stalk Benzo and Souji in Edo Japan.



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ふたがしら

第一集

オノ・ナツメ

IKKI COMIX

小学館

IKKI 568

赤目一味の頭目の死に立ち会った弁蔵と宗次。
頭目はふたりに「一味のこと、まかせた」と言い残し、息を引き取った。
ところが、跡目に据えられたのは頭目の弟分・甚三郎。
この采配に納得のいかぬふたりは、一味を離れて旅立つ決意をする。
そう、「でっかいことをやる」ために！

オノ・ナツメによる
心沸き立つ江戸活劇、ついに開幕!!

もくじ

第一話 【〇〇一】
第二話 【〇五七】
第三話 【一〇五】
第四話 【一一九】
第五話 【一五三】
第六話 【一七九】

Chapter 1

kyaaaah!
Bastard!
Whack
Kyaaah!
gr
ab
gr

Come and get me!
Too many officials come in and out of here.
It's risky drawing unwanted attention.
Give me all you've got!
They're only fast when they run.

Did any blood get on your kimono?
Don't let me see your face again!

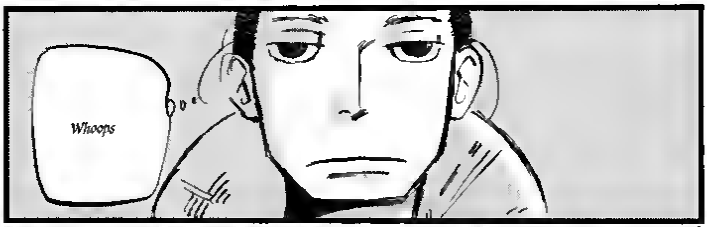
You wrecked my shop! What am I going to do?
Oh?
Well, sorry.
You shouldn't get so close while watching a scuffle between ruffians.
What if you get hurt?
Thank you..
Mister!
Why's he trying to show off?

All I have is money
Cha-ching!
That will suffice.
Hmm.
Bring me wine!
Yes, yes
Bring the gentleman some wine!
Didn't you hear that guy he was fighting with say "He stole my money bag!"
That must be it.
To the victor go the spoils.
Can't believe they were also pickpocketing and on top of that, picking a fight!
That was some rotten luck, eh?
Couldn't agree more. I was just sitting here trying to enjoy my drink.
As long as you weren't attempting to pick their pockets too.

I don't want to say too much.
What do you think?
Why?
These thieves prey on this whole area!
There's not one person in this post town who doesn't know about them.
They go after travelers on the road or work a crowd of people gathering to see the Gosanke procession to the temple of Daishi-sama.
7
...want to accomplish something really big.
Which house are you from?
You're a tough fighter. Are you a Gosanke?
You said it.
...Can't be happy with bastards like them lording over you, eh?
Nope!
That's why watching you go off on them felt so good.

Oh, that sounds great!
Ooh!
Ooh!
Why don't you live here?
Well, tonight I'll have to return to the post station and find myself a place to sleep
Ha Ha Ha
For example,
...eliminating the villains in this...
...post town.
CAW
CAW
CAW

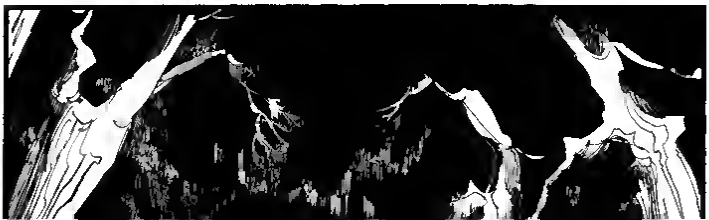
So I pickpocketed some pickpockets...

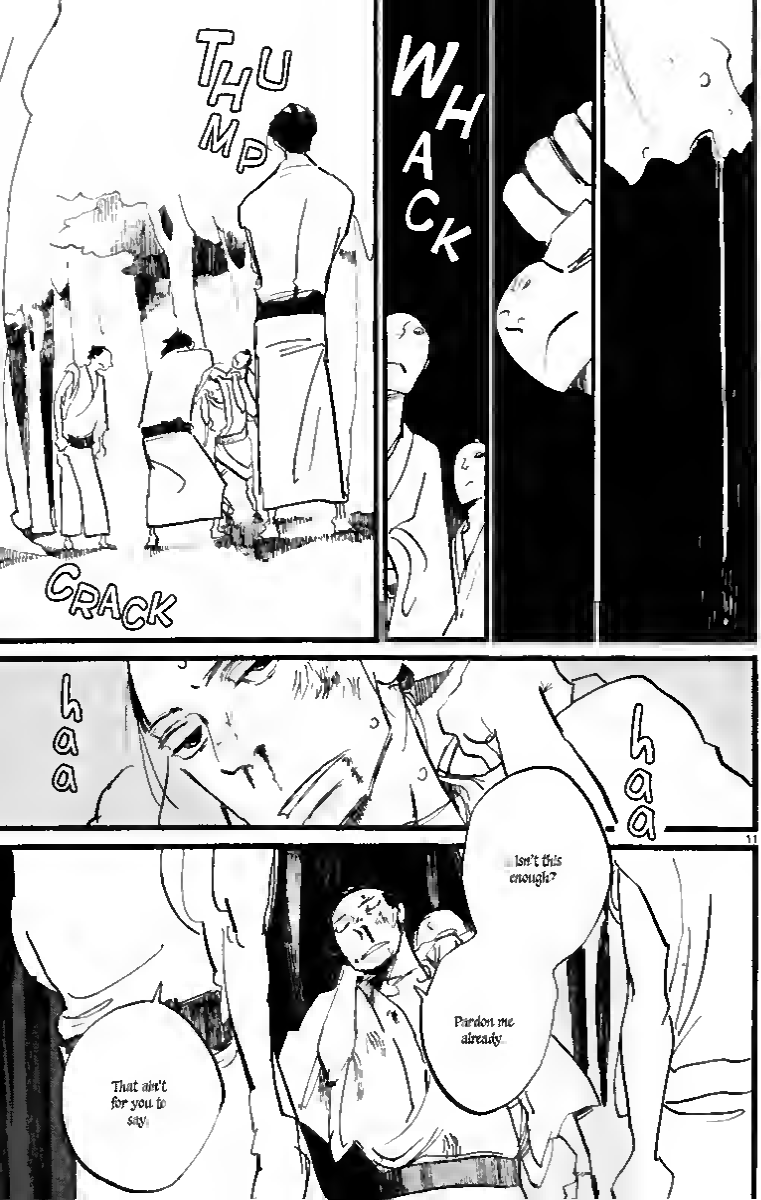

Whoops

Clink
Alright
I'll make a run for the next station.
ka-ching
Clink
Clink

10

We've got some unfinished business..
Way too many!
Which gang are they from..?




THUMP
CRACK
WHACK
haa
haa
Isn't this enough?
Pardon me already.
That ain't for you to say.

I told you, didn't I...?
I didn't know you were pickpockets.
haa
...How many of you are there in this gang?
With this many people going around stealing, anyone can easily tell who you are.
Yet none of you are getting arrested, and you're throwing your weight around, so that must mean...

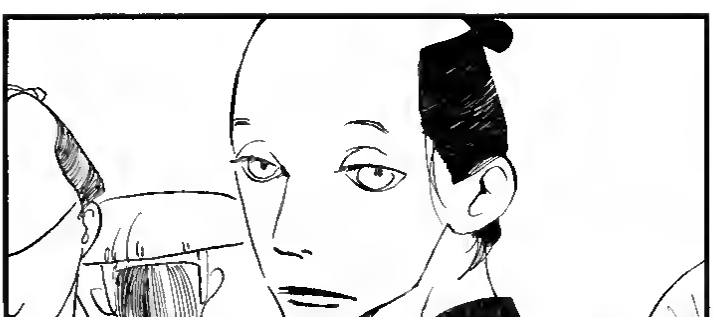
The magistrate's in on it too?
13
Why you..
wack
Kill him. Alright
I can't becoming a murderer.
Let's wrap him up in a bamboo mat and throw him in the river.
OK.
Wait, wait, wait.
You can use me.
I can be of help.
You already know how good I am, right?
I want to live here...
...peacefully...
...As a pickpocket.
Alright, bring me the woven mat.
It's the river for him.

We've had quite a turnout.
Did you come with the Gosanke?

I'll carry my own baggage.
More importantly do you know that girl?
Which one?
Ahh.
Yes of course.
It's better not to get involved with her.
We never hear anything good from her household.

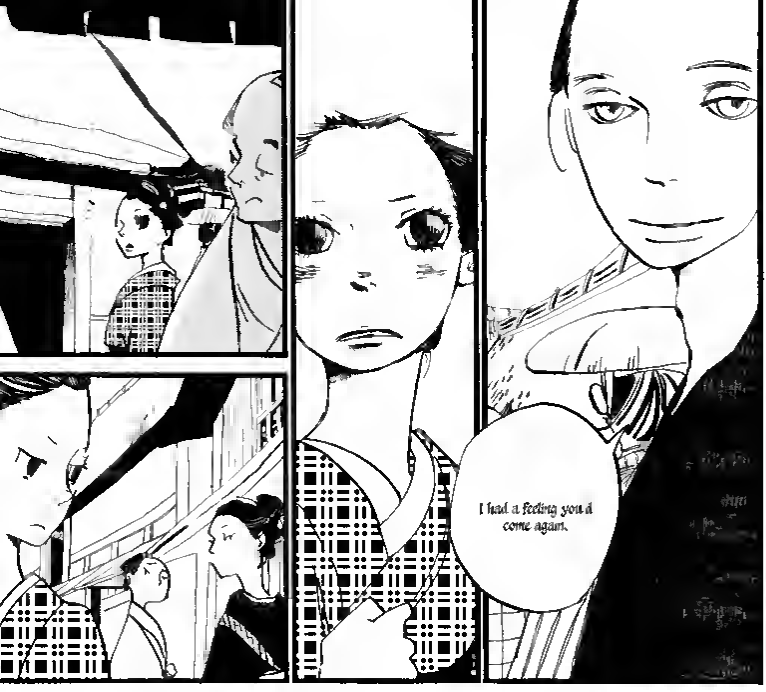
What is that?
Young Lady.
The man from this afternoon?
We're sorry you had to set your eyes on such filth.
Filthy mikeal

I'm surprised there's another superior...
Shut your mouth!
I admit you must have some nimble fingers to be able to pocket Shogun's money bag
You were only noticed because one of the others happened to be around, eh?
Perhaps you are a good find for us.
Don't laugh!
Well, we'll talk tomorrow.
I have a meeting to attend to after this.
We'll split the profits tomorrow.
Yes.
Be careful.
You're not setting me free?
Not a peep outta you!
It's tomorrow, got it?
Tomorrow?!



!

I thought you would be departing today?
You're not wearing traveling clothes.
Y-


I had a feeling you'd come again.

glance

It's all because of that lousy magistrate.
I wish he would disappear.
My father isn't at fault.
He just supervises those thieves
He was only trying to earn money like everyone else.
but the magistrate caught him and extorted money
So he had no choice but to recruit more underlings ..
until it grew into such a large gang...

You smell a little different...
...from those other men.
Do I look like one?
!
You're not a yabunin, are you?
Father told me to be careful of you.

That's...
And you're walking with me like this
Even though you know about my family, you didn't run away

Do you come to the shrine often?
I'd be bored just staying at home.

But there are so many people here.

so you must be careful.
I can't allow you to get caught up in a disturbance like yesterday's.

That man...
We have him at our house.
He stole from one of our men, so they rolled him up in a bamboo mat.
Even now he's on our dirt floor...

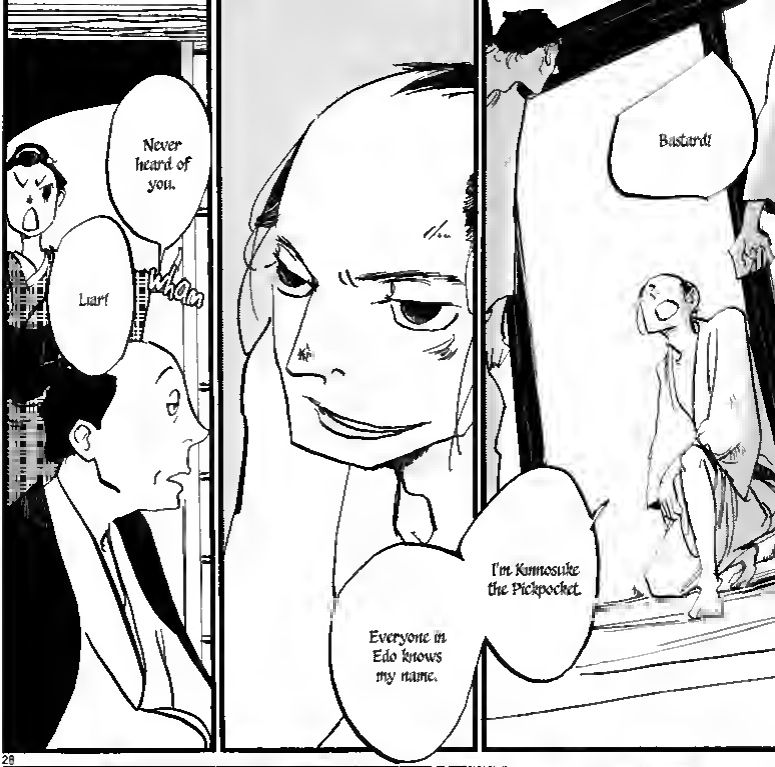
I know about him...
He caused a ruckus at the last post town I was at.
He's probably just a gangster.

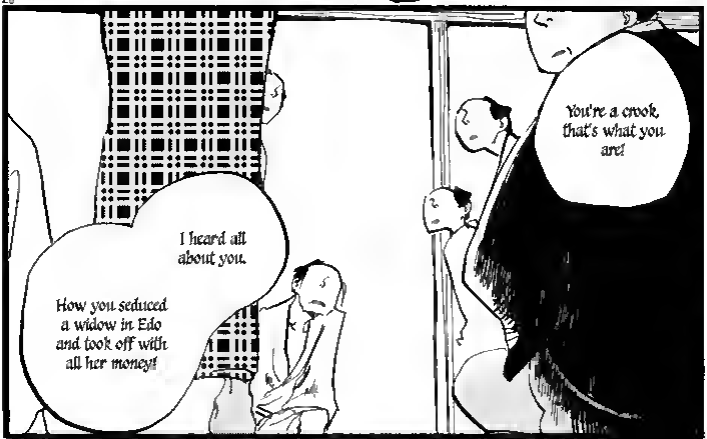
splash
splash
Wait.
I saw you yesterday.
That's not a towel!
Hop
Hop
Hop
rub
rub
Ahh.
Mind handing me a towel?
Towel.

what the hell did you do to our young lady?!
The daughter, eh...?

What about wanting to live an easy life?
Life should be enjoyed.
Didn't you want to punish villains and accomplish something big?
I do!
I want to punish these villainous wealthy merchants who come to barter at the shrine by taking away their money!
So you want us to take you into our gang, do you?
Can't seem to trust you one bit.
What the heck is it that you really want to do?

I want to make a name for myself.
How it's done doesn't matter.
27
Dethroning you would be irresistable.
So you'll be under me.
and yet somehow making a name for yourself, eh?


Never heard of you.
Liar!
Whom
Bastard!
I'm Kumosuke the Pickpocket.
Everyone in Edo knows my name.


You're a crook, that's what you are!
I heard all about you.
How you seduced a widow in Edo and took off with all her money!

You ran away when you were about to be arrested there, didn't you?
You even went after my sleeve..
You're a woman's worst enemy!
What?
Otazu's sleeve, eh?
Scoundrel!
Let's toss him in the gaol!
What do we do with him afterward?
We'll hang him over the temple.
Who did you hear it from?
From Mibu-sama!
...That bastard who was next to you during the scuffle?
That's right!
Good grief.
What a pain.
Wanna boil or fry me? Well, give me all you've got!
Heh!

I didn't say you could beat the crap outta me.
Be quiet in there!
WHAM
clack
creak
creak
creak
WHAM
clack
clack
clack
How many keys do you have. ?

Ow ow..
Where is this place?

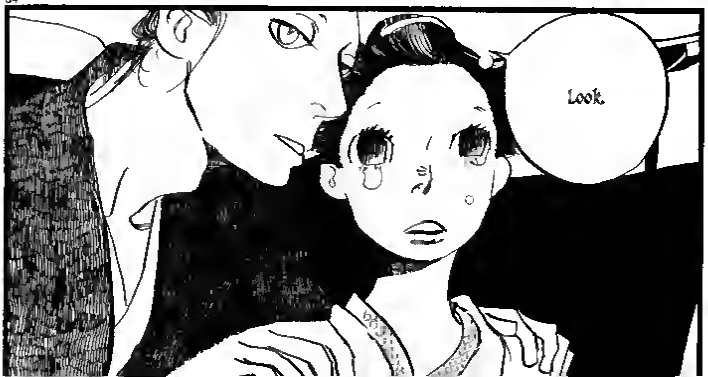
splat
I wanna accomplish something big...
...Not now, eh?

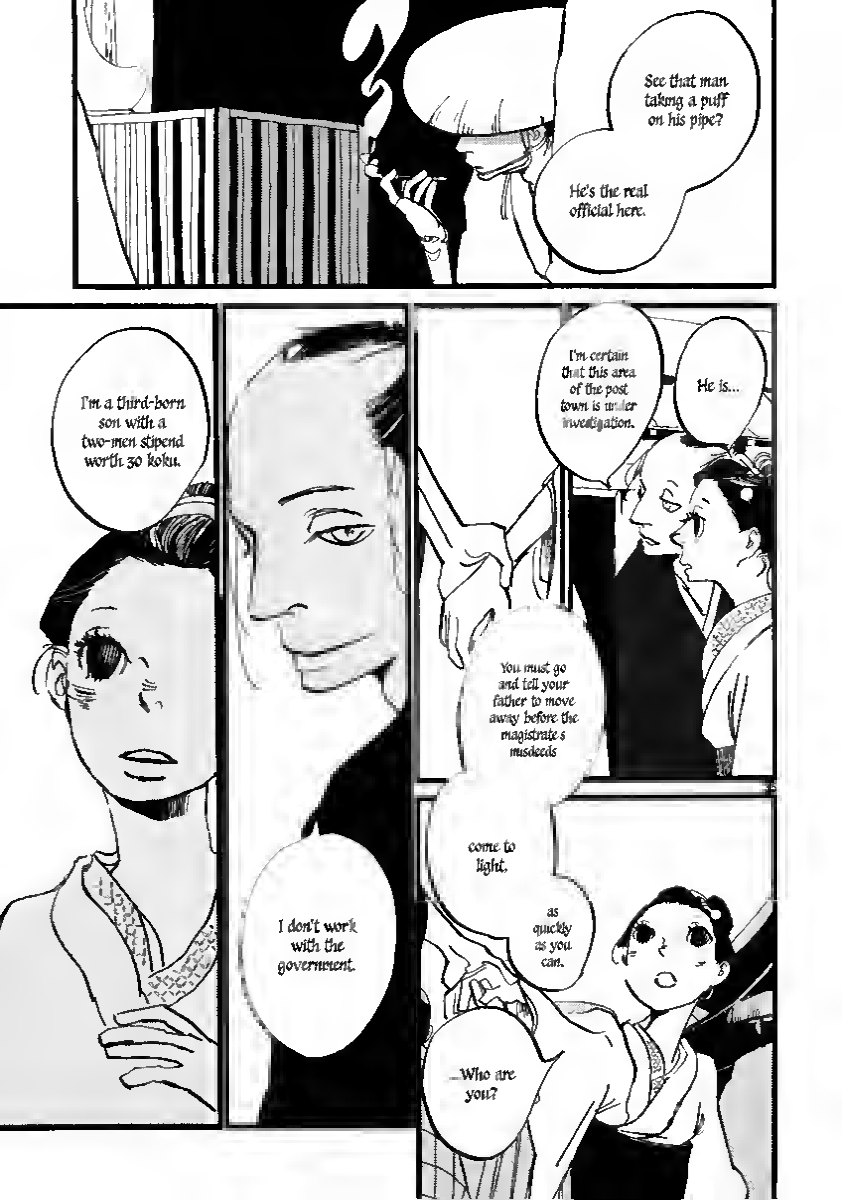
I see...
They threw that Kumosuke man in the zashikiro.

He's just too handsome.
Why's he dressed like that?
Yes, you're right.
Isn't that the retainer who crossed the river with us?
Wait!
He looks somber.

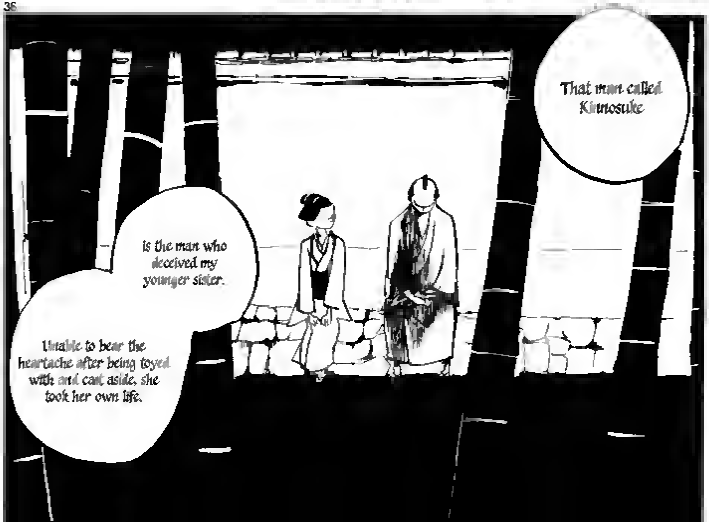
How about some dango?
clench
Not interested?
You're a samurai, aren't you?
I knew you were...
...a government official!

That's why you got close to me.
You want to come and arrest my father


Look.


See that man taking a puff on his pipe?
He's the real official here.
I'm a third-born son with a two-men stipend worth 30 koku.
I don't work with the government.
I'm certain that this area of the post town is under investigation.
He is...
You must go and tell your father to move away before the magistrate's misdeeds
come to light,
as quickly as you can.
...Who are you?

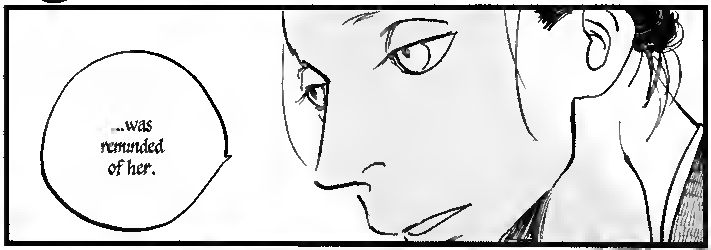
Why are you...
...dressed like a commoner?
I am a samurai.

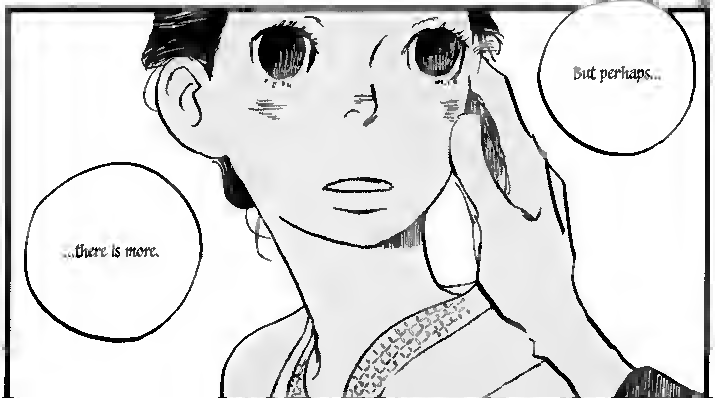

That man called Kinnosuke
is the man who deceived my younger sister.
Unable to bear the heartache after being toyed with and cast aside, she took her own life.

I caught wind of him in Edo several days earlier
He doesn't know what I look like either
He is but a scoundrel making trouble in one place after another
He probably still doesn't know her fate.
Out of pity for my sister,
I followed after him.
I want to make him bow before her spirit tablet.
With these two hands,
I will avenge my sister and put her spirit to rest.
This act of vengeance is not permitted.
It will bring trouble to my family's doorstep
When I achieve my most cherished desire, I want to be as inconspicuous as possible. That is why I am dressed as a commoner
But after seeing the way he was behaving in the streets, my anger flared up.
I cannot forgive him.
37

There's no time left.
I want you to bring him out of the prison cell.
Let me carry out my most cherished desire.
Please.

No...
It's fine!
I'll get Kimosuke out for you!
Yes, certainly I...
...because you were reminded of your sister?
.....
Were you nice to me...


...was reminded of her.


But perhaps...
...there is more.

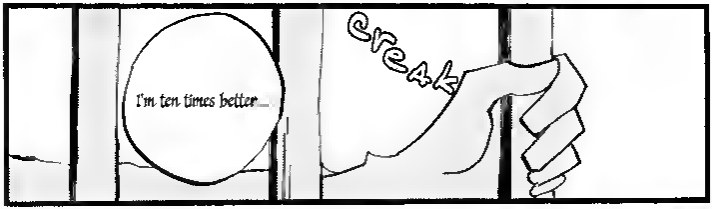
clack
clack
creak
My meal?
Young lady.

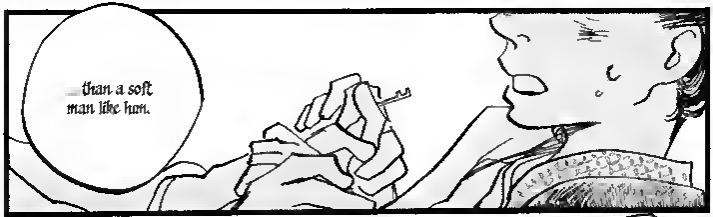
I'm getting you out of here.
Oh?
...Not that I want to
If I let you out of here...
...Mibu-san will end up a murderer... and I'll never see him again.
What?
Nothing!
Hey, hey hey! Lower your voice!
Someone might come.
grr grr grr

Slip
!

So you've become close to that Mibu guy, eh?

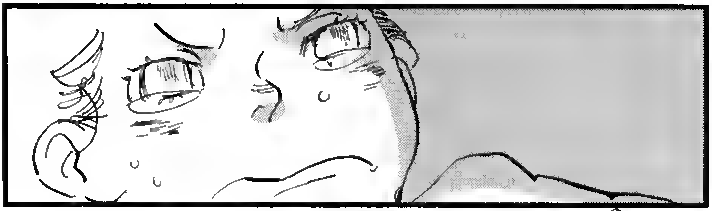
Did he hold onto you real tight?
What, so he only held your hand?
Mibu-san is different from you!
Did that bastard get to enjoy your youthful body?


I'm ten times better...
CREAK


...than a soft man like him.

That isn't true.
No, you're not!
Absolutely not!

'Course I'm better.



No, you're not!
That isn't true.

What do you mean, it can't...
...be true?

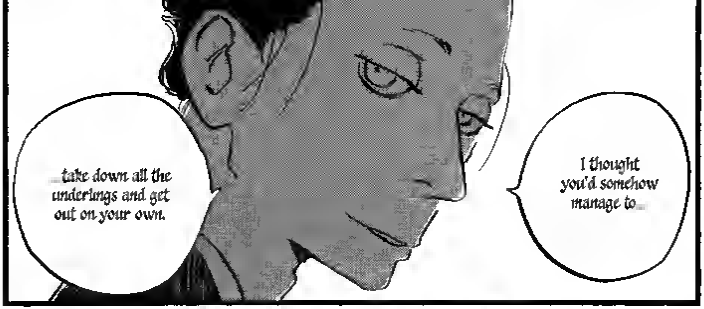
Mibu-san...!
I've come to save you.
Kinnosuke.

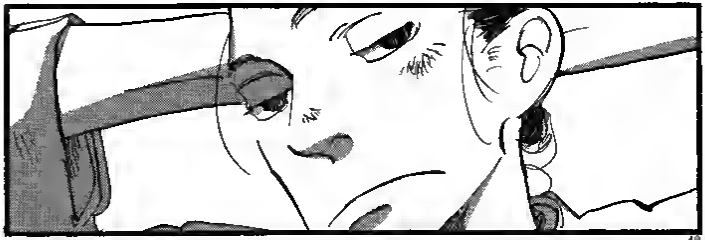
I've been waiting...
Mibu!

Sheesh!
Sheesh!
Pulling some random name outta your ass
What about you? Calling yourself Kintosuke?
Not with that mug of yours!
Ha Ha Ha!
Mibu-san...?

You didn't do anything to her?
When I tried touching her cheek, she dashed off.
Cute little thing.
Thump
Ooph.
I stole into your house yesterday, but couldn't find the location of the secret room.

That's why I came to save you.
Well, I'm a crook after all
But, because you kept goofing up one thing after another I ended up getting thrown into the jailhouse.

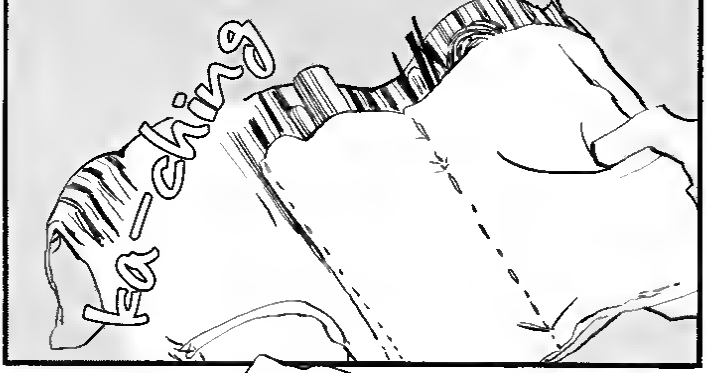

I thought you'd somehow manage to...
...take down all the underlings and get out on your own.



I get it.
It's not possible for me to be on my own right now!

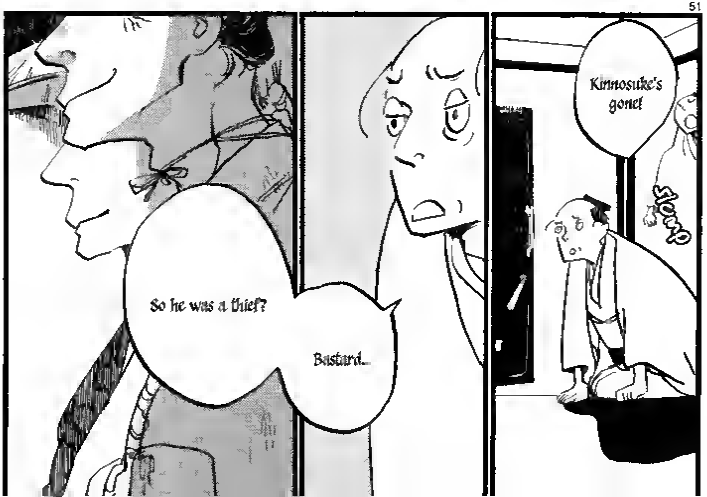
Thanks
At least say thanks to her.
creak
creak
I said it inside my heart.
Anyway,
those underlings are having a drinking bout.
The young lady treated us to some drinks
Nice one, Young Lady.
Now then,
we'll say our goodbyes.
slap

But before
that.


ka-ching

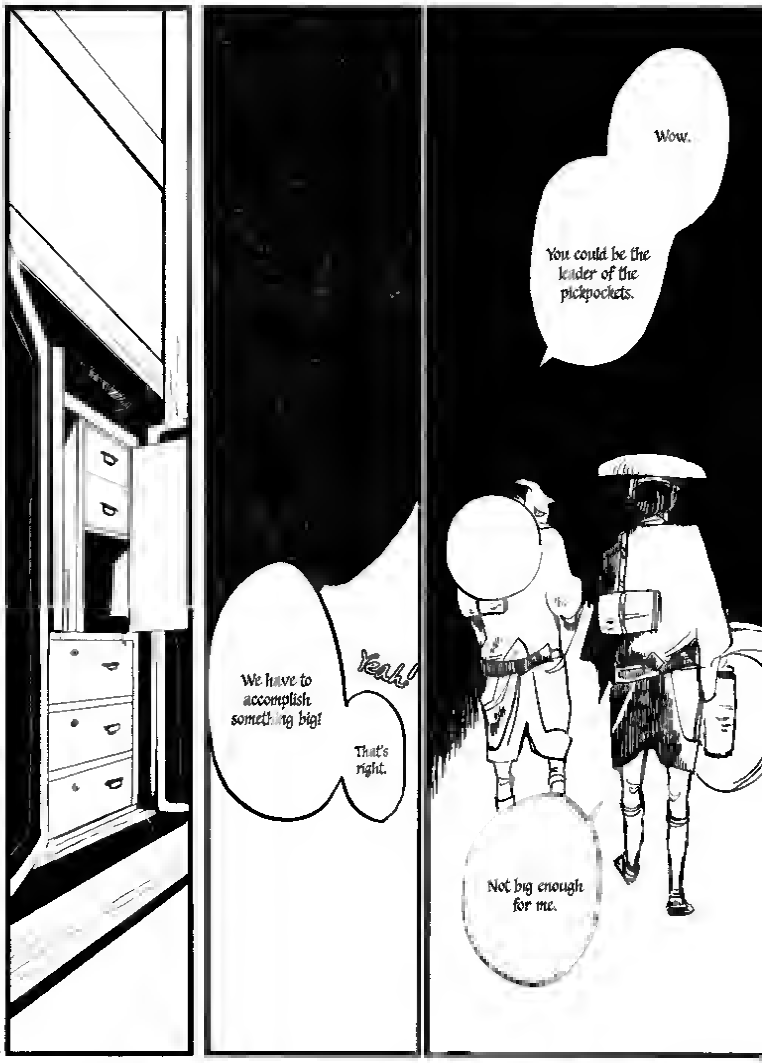
Th- The money...

51


Kinnosuke's gone!
slump
So he was a thief?
Bastard...

Now we can have a good time in Edo
HEE HEE HEE
I went after a stingy pickpocket. That's why I got caught up in that mess
You really didn't know the guy was a pickpocket?
Hey.
When'd you notice that girl was the daughter?
When we entered the front gate, I noticed an underling standing beside her
I knew he was a pickpocket.
So I figured she was in on it too...
I was wondering what you were up to
Sheesh.
If you knew you shoulda stopped me!
So when I caused that dispute, you got close to her right away, huh?
making eyes at her
Well, that was what happened.
I thought I could use her if things got outta hand.

Two of them?
On the street before the gate.
I happened to see two nice-looking men.
So I shwip swhip!
Nah, too much work with the hakama and all.
Not going with the samurai get-up?
Kahaha! You got me there!
Plus she seemed like a classy piece of work.
You're good at that stuff
Bet it won't work with you.
Picked up a nice promissory note.
53
Plop Plop
Nice pickup you have here.
ise pilgrimage, eh?
We won't come across them ever again, right?
Just in case


Wow.
You could be the leader of the pickpockets.
Not big enough for me.
Yeah!
We have to accomplish something big!
That's right.

Father, you must move away from here.
You have no future with that magistrate.
It's best to distance yourself from this place and start afresh.
Don't say you'll leave us.
We will go with you.
We can't do this alone.
Touched
Boys...!
Alright, let us all leave town.
Burglars, eh.
I wonder...

56

Chapter notes :

Page 7: Gosanke refers to Tokugawa's Three Related Houses, or three branch families of the Tokugawa clan. However in the Edo Period the term gosanke could also refer to various other combinations of Tokugawa houses, including (1) the shogunal Owari and Kii houses and (2) the Owari, Kii, and Suruga houses (all with the court position of dainagon)

Page 32: A zashikiro ("room-cage") was used in the Tokugawa period to confine mentally disturbed or wayward family members. In principle, it was necessary to obtain permission from the appropriate governmental authority before resorting to its use

Page 34: Dango are sweet dumplings made from glutinous rice flour

Page 36: Stipends were paid out from a central granary at the castle town. While measured in koku of rice, they were typically paid out in a combination of rice, other grains and specie. Generally, stipends paid entirely in rice were of higher prestige; those paid primarily in domainal fiat money were the most subject to inflation and the most difficult to convert or exchange for more widely accepted forms of currencies

Page 53: Hakama are a type of traditional Japanese clothing. They were originally worn only by men, but today they are worn by both sexes. Hakama are tied at the waist and fall approximately to the ankles. Hakama are worn over a kimono (hakamashita). There are two types of hakama: divided umanori and undivided andon bakama. The umanori type have divided legs, similar to trousers. Both types appear similar. A "mountain" or "field" type of umanori hakama was traditionally worn by field or forest workers.